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SARAH HERSTAND MEYERS

JAN 20 2000

MS. MEYERS: First, I just wanted to say how thankful I am to be in a country where we have the opportunity to speak out, even if it's against something that's being proposed by our government. And I would also like to thank the panel. I think we disagree on many, many things, but I appreciate your hard work and the long hours that I know each of you has put in. Before I start my prepared remarks, I want to say I've learned a lot. This morning I was here for a couple hours and again this evening. A lot I didn't know, but three things really stand out in my mind.

- 1 [One, I had no idea that Yucca Mountain was sacred to the Western Shoshone, or indeed to anyone;  
perhaps I should have. But that, to me, makes the whole thing even more appalling. I can't think of  
2 building something like this at Notre Dame; it makes it worse to me. Secondly, I learned that although  
I'm no mathematician, I've always had a respect for the laws of probability and I have less of one today.  
The numbers that were spoken of this morning when Ms. Dixon spoke, they were pretty high. They may  
seem very improbable and I'm not sure I agree with all the assumptions that were used to get at those  
probability figures, but I started thinking on the way home this morning that if someone tells me I have a  
one in ten chance of stubbing my toe if I run outside after my daughter in my bare feet, I don't really care.  
It's one in 10 that I stub my toe. I'm not sure there's a number you can give me for the probability of a  
spill of radioactive waste in my community or anywhere that I would be comfortable with, no matter how  
high.]

- And the third thing I learned that I wanted to comment on is I just moved here four days before Christmas  
from Maryland -- and I don't recommend anybody move four days before Christmas, in case you're  
3 thinking about it, but [I thought I didn't hear about this evening because my life has been very chaotic and  
then I find out that I'm not alone in this thing, a lot of people didn't hear until Monday, so I would like to  
add my voice to those of the people who have been calling for an extension, six-month extension to the  
process for public comments. I think that's reasonable and just.]

My name, again, is Sarah Herstand Meyers, and of the many reasons I could be here tonight, I'm here  
because I am a mother. My daughter is two and a half. I think this is the largest group I have spoken to --  
I mean it's the only group other than her play group since I left the work force two and a half years ago, so  
bear with me. As a mother I feel a deep responsibility, indeed a moral obligation to concern myself about  
the world we live in and about the world we will leave our children and theirs and so on.

About a month ago, as I said, my family and I moved from Maryland to St. Louis. We live in a  
community called Glendale. It's about 12 miles from here and it's about five minutes from the railroad  
tracks we've been speaking of, and ironically the sound of the train in the background is one of the  
reasons that we bought the house that we did.

- One morning this week I woke up to my two and a half year old daughter calling, mommy, I hear a train,  
it woke me up and I was not scared. She's very proud of the fact that she's mastered this new experience,  
these trains, and that they don't scare her anymore. In fact, she loves them. Whenever she hears one, she  
stops what she's doing and starts to move. You know how two year olds are, first her feet, then her legs,  
then her whole body, she dances a jig and her voice calls, mom, a train, I hear a train, and this happens  
4 over and over again every day at my house. [And now I find that unless I am very fortunate and unless the  
Department of Energy changes its plans, I will no longer dance a jig with my daughter when we hear the  
train. Instead, I will worry each and every time I hear the whistle. I will have to think several times a day  
of the nuclear waste traveling through our new home town, of the possibility of an accident, of the  
possibility of contamination.]

5 I do wonder about issues such as liability. I wonder who would be liable in the case of an accident. I 6  
wonder who would protect the men and women of our police and fire department who would be called on  
7... in such an emergency, and I don't know. I urge you to find some other way of dealing with the nuclear  
waste, some way besides shipping it through densely populated areas, through neighborhoods and  
8 communities. Indeed, I urge you to call a halt to the entire industry that is generating this waste.

7 cont. Before I end my statement, I would like to switch hats and speak very briefly as a former archeologist. I  
have experience digging through dirt to unearth and study items that have been buried for many years,  
and I know what kind of shape most of those items are in. I know how the earth moves in both subtle and  
gradual ways and also in very dramatic and abrupt ways over time. I've had to study physical geography,  
I've had to study geology and I also have some limited understanding of the various half-lives of  
radioactive isotopes, and as such I cannot understand how the proposed Yucca Mountain facility where  
waste would be buried in metal canisters at a depth of 1,000 feet in a facility designed to last 10,000  
years, I do not understand how this could possibly be considered a solution to the problem of nuclear  
waste, and that's even leaving out the whole transportation scenario.

The idea that the earth beneath Yucca Mountain will remain stable enough, protected enough from water  
seepage to protect us and our descendants from this radioactive waste for the period of even one half-life  
is unfathomable. In conclusion, I ask you this. Please do not ship highly radioactive waste through  
densely populated areas to a facility in Nevada that does not appear to be a viable, long-term solution to  
the problem of nuclear waste. I feel very deeply about this. I hope you will be able to act. Thank you.